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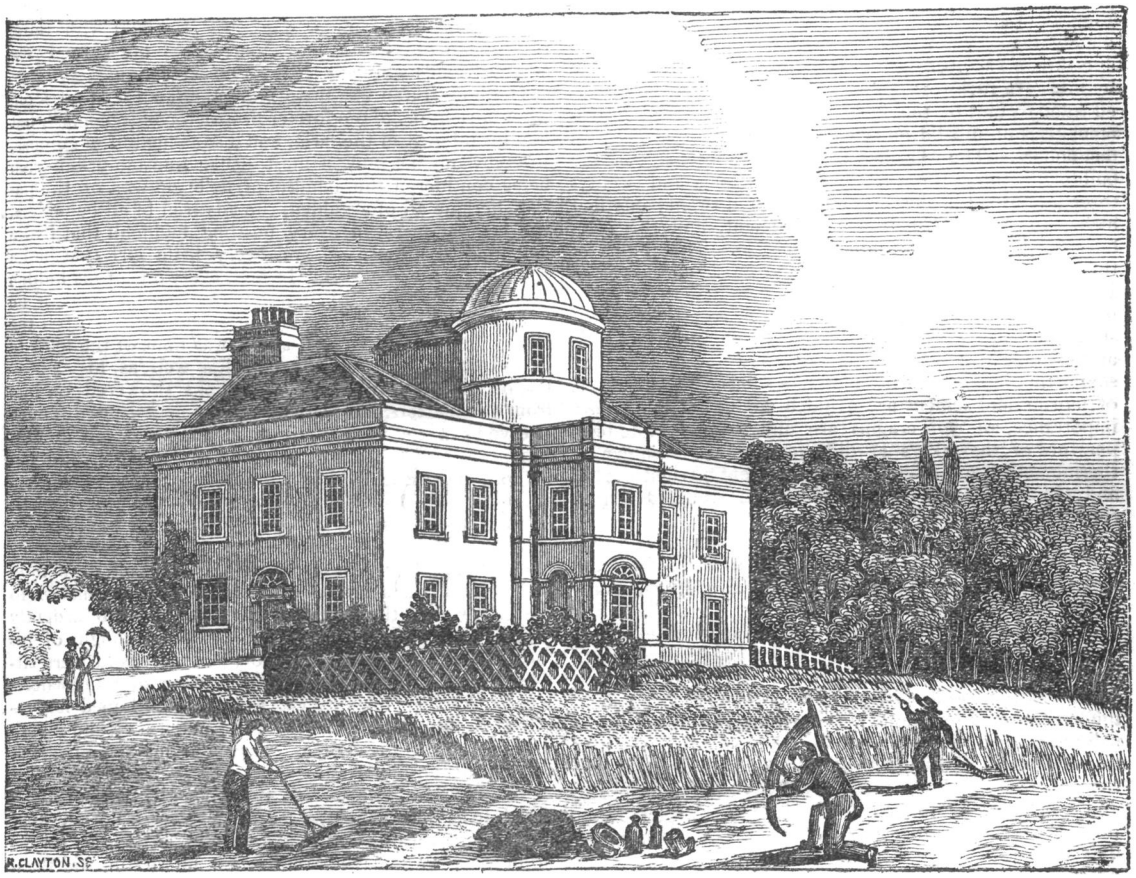

OBSERVATORY, DUNSINK.

The learned and munificent Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, Doctor Francis Andrews, having bequeathed to the College £3000, and £250 per annum, towards the building of an Observatory, and furnishing it with proper instruments, which sum was to arise from an accumulation of a part of his property, to commence upon a particular contingency happening in his family, the College, to hasten the execution of the plan, advanced from their own funds a sum considerably exceeding the original bequest; and having elected the Rev. H. Ussher as Professor, sent him to England to order from Mr. Ramsden the best instruments, without limitation of price. Those ordered were, a transit instrument of four feet axis, and six feet focal length, bearing four inches and a quarter aperture, with different magnifying powers; an entire circle of ten feet diameter, moveable on a vertical axis, for measuring altitudes; an equatorial instrument, the circles being five feet diameter; and an achromatic telescope, mounted on a polar axis, and carried by an heliostatic movement, for occasional observations.

The transit instrument arrived as ordered, while Dr. Ussher was Professor; but the great circle for altitudes was not sent from London till many years afterwards, in the time of his successor, the Rev. Dr. Brinkley, now Bishop of Cloyne, who made with it his observations upon the parallax of the fixed stars. This circle was begun, as ordered, with a diameter of ten feet; but was reduced by Ramsden to nine feet, and afterwards to eight feet, of which last size it was finished by Ramsden's successor, Berge. Only one other astronomical circle, so large as this, has been ever made, namely, that which was finished for Cambridge a few years ago, but which is not capable of moving in azimuth like the Dublin circle. The two remaining instruments, ordered by Dr. Ussher, were never sent from London; but the late Christopher Sharp of Dublin, had almost completed before he died, an equatorial instrument with heliostatic movement, conceived and executed in a style which does great honor to his memory. This instrument carries an achromatic telescope, furnished by Caûchoix of Paris, of which the object-glass is composed of a convex quartz, and a concave flint lens, and exceeds five inches in aperture. The Observatory possesses also an excellent achromatic telescope by Dollond, and clocks by Arnold and Sharp.

The next point to be considered was the arrangement of the building, and the most commodious disposition of the instruments, so as to give to each a situation justly suited to the particular observations to be made. Without loss of time, the Observatory was erected on Dunsink Hill, about four miles north-west of Dublin Castle, and about seventy yards above the level of the sea. It is founded on a solid rock of limestone of some miles extent, which, near the Observatory, rises to within six inches of the surface. The horizon is remarkably

extensive, without the smallest interruption on any side, except that on the south the Wicklow mountains, distant about fifteen English miles, rise about a degree and a half.

To give any thing like a correct idea of this building would occupy far more space than we could allocate to the subject. We shall merely notice a few particulars. It is a handsome building, presenting in front a façade of two wings, and a projecting centre, crowned by a dome. Besides apartments for the professor, there are two rooms particularly appropriated to astronomical purposes—the Equatorial and Meridian rooms. The former is immediately beneath the dome, which is intersected by an aperture of two feet six inches in breadth, and is moveable by means of rackwork, so that the aperture may be directed to any point of the horizon. The equatorial instrument rests on a solid pillar of substantial masonry, sixteen feet square. The Meridian room of the west side of the building, is thirty-seven feet two inches long, and twenty-three feet broad in the inside clear, and twenty-one feet high. It contains the transit instrument, and the celebrated eighty-feet Astronomical Circle. The pillars of the transit instrument—which stand on a solid block of Portland stone, nine feet two inches in length, by three feet in breadth, and sixteen inches thick—are seven feet six inches high, their bases three feet from north to south, and two feet six inches from east to west. Each of the supporting pillars consisting of one solid piece, all effects of mortar and cement are avoided, and what is of more importance, all iron cramps are unnecessary. The temperature of the pillars at different heights is shown by thermometers, the tubes of which are bent at right angles, and their bulbs are inserted into the stone, and surrounded with dust of the same stone.

We need scarcely mention, that the Professor who now fills the situation with so much honour to himself and the College, is William Rowan Hamilton, Esq. Royal Astronomer of Ireland.

The Observatory commands on the south side a fine view of the surrounding country, with a gentle declivity to the river, and from thence a varied picture of the rich scenery of the woods of the Phœnix Park, terminated in the back-ground by the majestic grandeur of the Wicklow mountains. To the south-east lies the city of Dublin, distant four miles, the semicircular bay with its shipping, and the great South Wall, extending five miles into the sea, and terminated by the Light-house; the new piers forming Kingstown harbour; the ridge of rocky hills, called The Three Brothers forming the head of Dalkey, and bearing Malpas's Obelisk on the highest point. On the east and north-east Clontarf and its environs, the Hill of Howth, Ireland's Eye, and Lambay. From thence to the north-west the prospect is so uncommonly level and extensive as to gratify the astronomer much more than the painter; but even this variety is not without its beauty. To the south-west are the ruins at Castleknock; and to the west, the extended and rich view of Kildare, in which Mr. Conolly's Obelisk forms a grand and central object.

THE BOCCAUGH'S CURSE.

Among all the sweet scenes of my native home, that fancy paints for my mind's eye in the calm soft twilight, there is not one over the memory of which it delights me more to linger, than the snug little embowered farm-house of Dunglass, and its comfortable, good-humoured occupants, Dermod Moran and his pretty Norah. Charity and hospitality are, I am proud to say, no scarce virtues among my countrymen; but here they flourished in their glory. Not a poor neighbour within the circuit of a mile—not a beggar went the road—but could boast of having received the ready and welcome aid which the worthy couple seemed almost proud to be able to offer; and never did the blessings of the grateful distressed bestow a richer reward, for Dermod's crops and cattle would have been the envy of the whole country round, if they could have had the heart to envy such a man any thing. However, when old crones would gather at a wake or other meeting, and begin, like their betters, to grow tired of praising their neighbours, and qualify their former good words with a little scandal, I must acknowledge, that Dermod and his Norah used come in occasionally for a sly remark from the old ladies, who could declare, that "there was a time when they had full and plenty, and yet the poor were no betther for id; bud, any how, they suffered hard for id, an' shure now that they're well off agin, an' show how they know betther, we oughtn't to be thinkin' of what's past an' gone." All this was perfectly true: and, moreover, as the story is worth telling, I do not see why I should put myself under the same restraint with those respectable old ladies, particularly as I am sure I am among friends who will let it go no farther.

Dermod Moran was little more than a green gossoon, when a rich uncle, the former proprietor of Dunglass, left him his interest in the farm, and a stocking full of guineas, whereby our hero, by a most usual transmutation, from being considered the handsome ne'er-do-well of the parish, became all of a sudden, the admired of all beholders, the general mark of every bustling buddogh that had a daughter to dispose of, and every little girl that had a hand to do the like with. In fact, every one of his hidden virtues burst forth with such a blaze. that his vices, if he had any, were quite lost in the splendour. To tell the truth, Dermod had virtues, and it was none of the least of them that his head was not turned as well as his character, or that the volley of kind looks showered on him from all quarters, scarcely for a moment caused him to swerve from the vows of his other days. A few months passed over the head of this new Fortunatus, and not without imparting to him an ordinary share of wisdom and steadiness, evinced perhaps by his donning his best habiliments one fine summer's morning, and making his way over the fields to the cottage of the widow Mooney and her daughter Norah, who in his darker days took little time to consider before she blushed an affirmative to the suit which the wild but generous boy so ardently pressed at a time when either had little thought of his future good fortune. The widow and her child were sitting in front of their little cottage at their spinning wheels when the rather unexpected, though long-hoped for, recreant stood before them with as much love and happiness beaming in his eyes as ever set a maiden's heart at rest on this all-important subject.

"Norah," said he, before the poor girl had half-recovered from her delightful surprise, "'twas nothin' kept me, but just waitin' till all was ready, an' there 'ud be no delays; an', maybe, to have a bit of fun wid them things beyant, that never looked the same side ov the road with me afore: so, acushla, don't blame me for keepin' them in the dark; but come wid me, an' let me show them the choice I made."

While he was uttering these few words, the cheeks of the little maiden underwent as many changes as ever such words could excite; and at length, with some difficulty, she was enabled to answer,

"Och, Dermod avick, it's sure enough that I was fretted by your not comin'; bud, any how, I knew it wasn't to be, an' it oughn't to be, for you're rich now, an' I've nothin' bud the ould white-faced cow. So, now, dont mind my cryin', for I can't help it; bud go an' look for some fortune, an' forget me, an' heaven bless you."

My readers may be sure that the tears which burst from her eyes during this little harangue, completely invalidated her advice, for Dermod, warmly pressing her hand with all the fervency of a fond heart, declared, that rich or poor she was his, and should be his; and he kept his promise, for before that day three weeks Norah Mooney and her old white-faced cow were ensconced in Dunglass, to the no small surprise of the would-be wise and prudent people of the neighbourhood. Time passed on—but, unfortunately, the taunts and thwartings which poor Norah daily met from her less fortunate rivals, hindered time from accustoming her to her change of condition, or awaking a proper feeling in her bosom on account of it. In a word, Norah became proud and selfish—her temper, naturally bland and gentle, soured beneath unkindness, and in spite of all the blessings she enjoyed, she became so ungrateful as to drive from her door the very objects of